

State Accepting Public Comments on Plans to Transfer Funds Between Housing Development Programs and to Modify Planning Grant Language

Nov. 19, 2014

BATON ROUGE - The State of Louisiana is accepting public comments on an Action Plan Amendment that will transfer \$4.7 million from the Housing Development Loan Fund to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit "Piggyback" program and modify language within the Planning, Administration and Technical Assistance program.

The transfer proposed in APA 64 is necessary because the Housing Development Loan Fund program is nearing completion. The Piggyback program has already produced 59 developments that provide more than 7,000 rental units, more than 4,500 of which offer affordable rental rates for tenants at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income.

"The Piggyback program has been successful in providing quality, affordable workforce housing not only in response to hurricanes Katrina and Rita, but also hurricanes Gustav and Ike," said Pat Forbes, executive director of the Louisiana Office of Community Development. "Moving these funds from a program that is completing operations to a successful, ongoing program like Piggyback will allow us to help as many of our residents as we can who need affordable rental housing."

The modification to the Planning program will extend the three-year time period previously set in other Action Plan Amendments and allow for jurisdictions other than parish governments to receive funding. Grant awards may be extended if: the grantees were initially unable to find qualified staff or contractors or had difficulty integrating additional staff into the organizational structure due to civil service or local personnel policies; subsequent natural disasters exacerbated or impeded recovery efforts; or projects were slow in being implemented due to shifting priorities at the local level.

Allowing for funding outside of parish governments will open up eligibility to political subdivisions, public agencies and public or private nonprofit organizations.

The formal public comment period for the plans begins today, Nov. 19, 2014 and runs until Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014, at 5 p.m. After accepting public comments, the state will submit the plans to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for final federal approval.

Citizens, community leaders and elected officials can access the plans and submit comments online by visiting http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/cdbq/dr/KR_ActionPlans.htm and opening **APA 64**. A copy of the plans can be requested by calling (225) 219-9600.

After accepting public comments, the state will submit the plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for final federal approval. Members of the public can submit comments several ways:

- Using the online form at http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/cdbq/dr/KR_ActionPlans.htm ;
- Emailing them to ocd@la.gov ;
- Mailing them to Disaster Recovery Unit, P.O. Box 94095, 70804-9095, Attn: Janice Lovett; or
- Faxing them to the attention of Janice Lovett at (225) 219-9605.

The Disaster Recovery Unit within the Office of Community Development is dedicated to helping Louisiana's citizens recover from hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike and Isaac. As the state's central point for hurricane recovery, OCD-DRU manages the most extensive rebuilding effort in American history, working closely with local, state and federal partners to ensure that Louisiana recovers safer, stronger and smarter than before.

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